

“A Voice for Alabamians with Disabilities”



2011
annual report of the

Alabama State Rehabilitation Council

Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services



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“A Voice for Alabamians with Disabilities”

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) continues to be the voice for people with all types of disabilities in the Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) division of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS). In partnership with VRS, the SRC helps to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive appropriate services to maximize their employment opportunities and independence.



This report outlines the achievements and accomplishments of the past year in the ongoing effort to make a meaningful difference in the lives of persons with disabilities.

Davis Martin, Chairperson
State Rehabilitation Council



Our mission at the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential. For many, maximum potential includes independence through employment. Last year, thanks to guiding partners like the State Rehabilitation Council, our Vocational Rehabilitation Service division provided education and employment related services to more than 31,000 Alabamians, assisting 4,500 in becoming successfully employed. At the same time, nearly 1,300 Alabama businesses received employment and disability services through our department.

As we enter a new year, I want to commend all SRC members for their commitment to quality services and successful outcomes. I would also challenge them to resolve to work even harder in 2012 so that the Alabamians with disabilities we represent will have even greater opportunity to succeed.

Cary Boswell, Commissioner
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

Vocational Rehabilitation Service and the State Rehabilitation Council ...

...a unique partnership

In January 1995, as mandated by the Alabama Legislature, Vocational Rehabilitation Service was moved from the State Department of Education to the newly created Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS). This milestone event created a unique partnership between the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the newly named board of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. Working in partnership with ADRS, SRC provides valuable input in administrative codes and rules necessary to regulate Alabama's vocational rehabilitation services.

Working together, the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council strengthen the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services for all Alabamians with disabilities.

The mission of the Council is ...

... to provide support and assistance to the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services through program planning, policy development and delivery of services, thus preparing Alabama's citizens with disabilities for competitive employment.



Membership Composition

State Rehabilitation Council Chart of Representation

SRC membership consists of persons with disabilities, parents and guardians of persons with disabilities, advocates, service providers and representatives of the business industry and labor community. Members are appointed by the Governor, and most have a personal interest in ensuring that Alabama's citizens with disabilities receive the services and supports they need to become productive and self-sufficient through gainful employment. Membership is geographically and culturally diverse to assure a broad view into decisions that impact vocational rehabilitation services.

Mandated Representation	Current Number of Representatives	Number of People with Disabilities	Number of Parents
Commissioner	1	0	0
State Independent Living Council (SILC)	2	2	0
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (State Department of Education)	1	0	1
Client Assistance Program	1	1	1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	1	0	0
Community Rehabilitation Programs	2	2	0
Business, Industry and Labor	6	0	1
Physical Disabilities	9	9	1
Cognitive Disabilities	1	0	0
Sensory Disabilities	3	3	0
Mental Illness	0	0	0
Intellectual Disability	1	0	0
Advocacy Organization	4	1	1
American Indian Program Representative	0	0	0
WIA Representative	1	0	0
Former or Current Recipient of VRS Services	13	13	1
Total	46	31*	6

* Actual membership is 31, with some individuals representing more than one category, and does not include new members, but includes those whose terms expired or who resigned in 2011.

* Some appointments are pending.



SRC Functions

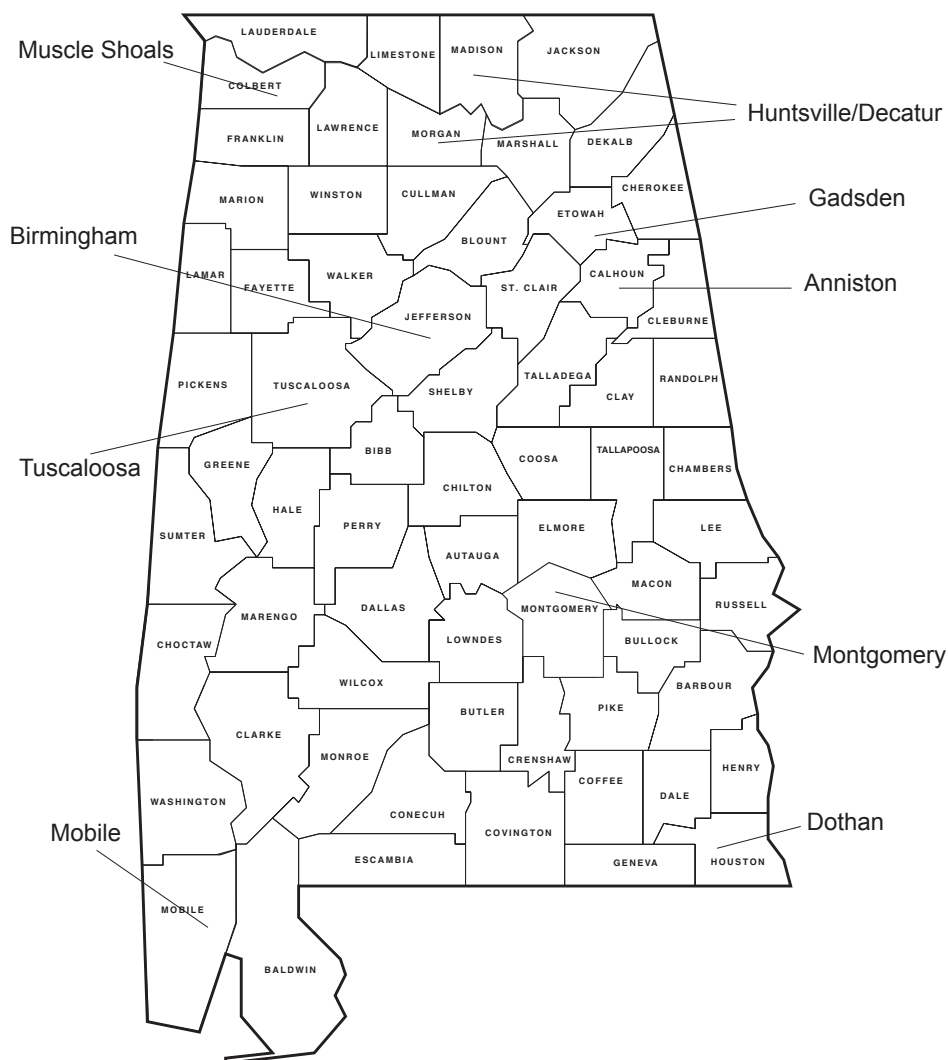
- ❖ to review and analyze the State Plan and advise ADRS regarding its related responsibilities within the plan;
- ❖ in partnership with ADRS, to develop and review goals and priorities, evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program, and submit reports of progress to the Rehabilitation Services Administration commissioner;
- ❖ to advise ADRS regarding authorized activities under the Rehabilitation Act and to assist in preparation of the State Plan, its amendments and in carrying out other requirements of the Rehabilitation Act;
- ❖ to review and analyze the effectiveness of consumer and other surveys;
- ❖ to provide for coordination and establishment of working relationships among ADRS, the State Independent Living Council and independent living centers;
- ❖ to coordinate council activities with activities of other councils;
- ❖ to perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act; and
- ❖ to prepare and submit an annual report of council activities to the governor and the ADRS commissioner.

Local advisory councils

meet regularly to ensure a voice for consumers at the grassroots level.

In FY 2011, topics of discussion included:

- ❖ updates on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and the ADA Amendments Act;
- ❖ legislative proposals, such as those related to service animals, state ADA, a lemon law for assistive devices, a revised state accessible parking law and state tax incentives for employers;
- ❖ unmet needs of persons with disabilities to provide the Governor's Office on Disability with information;
- ❖ identification of state/local resources for people with disabilities; and
- ❖ these advisory groups continue to increase opportunities to obtain consumer input at the local level.



2011 Highlights

“A Voice for Alabamians with Disabilities”

31,710

VR consumers served

4,547

consumers who became employed

83%

of consumers employed had significant disabilities

1,342

businesses received no-cost services including those relocated to recruitment of pre-screened candidates, accommodation assistance, employee retention, staff training, and much more

1,427

consumers received 8,559 one-on-one services from the department's 13 business relations coordinators to ensure their “job readiness” and to facilitate their employment in the public and private sector

537

consumers who became successfully employed as a result of these services

20

strategically located community VRS offices

VR consumers speak

2011 Consumer Satisfaction Survey

(comments from deaf and blind surveys not complete at press time)

Results of the FY 2010 Consumer Satisfaction Survey indicated an overall satisfaction level of 80 percent.

Of the services provided to the consumers, those receiving the highest satisfaction percentages included:

- VR counseling and guidance
- college/university training
- assessment

Other results:

- The most common major benefit consumers reported was the relationship with their VR counselor. For example, 80 percent reported a favorable level of satisfaction with vocational guidance and counseling services.
- Sixty-one percent of consumers reported being involved with the planning for their job goal and 62 percent with service providers.
- The major benefits listed or received were employment, education, counseling, general knowledge and financial assistance.

*FY 2011 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment**

Top 5 unmet needs

- supported employment
- interagency collaboration
- assistive technology
- provision of training (e.g. college/university or other vocational training) in order to obtain employment
- Job Search Assistive Services



**data obtained from a meta-analysis of various agency's outcome data, needs assessments, and surveys*

SRC performance

The SRC held quarterly meetings on Feb. 8, May 17, Aug. 30, and Oct. 11, 2011. During these meetings, the SRC performed the following functions:

Review and input on the consumer satisfaction surveys for deaf and blind individuals and general VR program and results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRC members made no recommendations for changes to either of these surveys. • Received information on the Blind Services Satisfaction Survey. • The SRC partnered with the Auburn University Center for Disability Research and Service to conduct a consumer satisfaction survey for general VR program. • The SRC also partnered with Auburn to conduct the 2011 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.
Review of Impartial Hearing Officer List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended no changes due to low number of hearings. • Determined that eight persons on list were sufficient.
Review and update of SRC Resource Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed mileage reimbursement rate to 55.5 cents per mile. • The SRC Executive Subcommittee submitted an SRC budget in collaboration with ADRS Commissioner Cary Boswell. This budget mirrors the resources listed in the Resource Plan.
Review and input on CSPD	Recommended no changes.
Review and input on State Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SRC chair again appointed a subcommittee to review the State Plan. The subcommittee recommended that the State Plan (as written by the SRC) be adopted. • The full SRC approved this recommendation. • SRC members were encouraged to attend public hearings on the State Plan.
Training on the following subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) • E-rehab SRC training modules • VR process
Coordinate council activities with activities of other councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided annual reports and resource plans to other SRCs upon request. • Attended Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities meetings to share information. • The SRC liaison and SRC chair continued their involvement with the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC). They participated in NCSRC conference calls and attended NCSRC sessions during Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) conferences. Information from NCSRC meetings was shared with SRC members. • Several SRC members served on the State Advisory Council for the state's Governor's Office on Disability. • Several SRC members were involved in the planning and coordination of the third Disability Summit for the Governor's Office on Disability.

Establish working relationships among the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), the State Independent Living Council (SILC), and independent living centers (ILCs)

- The SRC liaison continued to serve on the board of an independent living center and shared information between the two groups.
- Several SRC members served on the SILC and had the opportunity to report significant information to the SRC.
- Some SRC members were also members of the Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities (ACDD). As such, they shared information so that activities could be coordinated. The executive director of ACDD attended SRC meetings in FY 2011.

Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act

- The SRC reviewed and/or received information and was given an opportunity for input on the following:
 - a) Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act
 - b) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)
 - c) Current list of impartial hearing officers (IPOs) (no recommendations for changes to the list)
(The Consumer Services/Program Evaluation Subcommittee continues work on developing a checklist for IPOs.)
 - d) ADA Amendments Act
 - e) ADRS Business Intelligence program/dashboard
 - f) ADRS In-Service training grant
 - g) Alabama Business Leadership (ABLE) Network website
 - h) Client Assistance Program
 - i) ADRS budget
 - j) Definition of most significant disability policy
 - k) Order of selection policy
 - l) Two new SRC training modules
 - m) VR production
- E-rehab training module
 - At least three SRC members successfully completed the modules in FY 2011.
- Two SRC members continued their involvement with the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Council.
- The SRC Chair, Dave Martin, and SRC Liaison Graham Sisson continued to attend the Fall and Spring NCSRC and CSAVR meetings.
- The SRC Chair and the SRC Liaison also attended the National Rehabilitation Leadership Forum in Washington, D.C. in August 2011.

SRC subcommittee activities

Executive Subcommittee

**Davis Martin, chair • Scott Renner, vice chair • Cary Boswell
Staff Liaison: Graham Sisson**

Vision statement: To conduct planning for and administration of SRC meetings

Responsibilities:

- Schedule and make arrangements for quarterly meetings
- Plan the SRC agenda
- Report accomplishments
- Nominate officers

Accomplishments:

- Scheduled and made arrangements for quarterly meetings, planned the agendas and reported SRC accomplishments
- Approved updated Resource Plan and recommendation that Resource Plan mileage rate increase from 55 cents to 55.5 cents
- Approved appointment of new subcommittee chairs for membership and employment subcommittees
- The chair, through the SRC liaison, continued to represent Alabama's SRC on the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) and its Steering Committee.
- Encouraged 100 percent SRC member participation in e-rehab training modules
- Recommended appointment of new committee chair for membership and bylaws subcommittees.
- Recommended that activities of membership and bylaws subcommittees be combined.

Business Relations and Employment Subcommittee

**Hal George, chair • Joan Adkison • Glen Camp • Russell Dubose
• Mickey Hutto • Glennie Melton • Keith Patterson • Omar Smith
Staff Liaison: Peggy Anderson**

*Vision Statement: To enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities
and employer satisfaction with VR services*

Activities:

- Provide feedback on various Alabama Business Leadership Employment (ABLE) Network priority issues and activities, such as the ADRS-supported website for ABLE and the applicant pool
- Assist with development, implementation and review of employer survey and business web page on ADRS website
- Review and critique ADRS intranet job bank and applicant pool
- Access and utilize available labor market trend information such as high growth and demand occupations
- Identify employer needs and areas of concern related to disability in the workplace
- Nominate employers for SRC vacancies to send to membership subcommittee
- Enhance business relations efforts by ADRS
- Continue to use feedback from the SRC Ad Hoc Committee of VR employer partners to advise the Business Relations and Employment Subcommittee

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“A Voice for Alabamians with Disabilities”

- Support the efforts of the National Employment Team (NET) for the state VR programs by:

- a) Serving as a conduit for communication to/from the NET through the ADRS designated “Point of Contact”
- b) Disseminating relevant information as appropriate

Activities:

- Recommended that employer survey be split into two parts: (1) satisfaction by employers with VR products and services and (2) needs assessment of employers
- Recommended that survey be sent to existing employer accounts and then be expanded to include other employers
- Employer survey should include language to allow a better explanation of satisfaction, not just using scales and figures
- Survey should include questions that allow for open comments
- Recommended the following for the business intelligence system: (1) add consumer profiles that include skills, job goals, expertise and labor pool data and (2) add business profiles that include trends, patterns, success rates, retention and turnovers
- Recommended the following be added to the ADRS business web page: (1) video testimonies from VR business clients (2) quick and obvious access and information for businesses and (3) feedback screen
- Recommended that existing VR business clients be given a business card with an ADRS listed business web page link
- Will continue to seek input from the Employer Ad Hoc Committee

Legislative/Public Information Subcommittee

**Keith Patterson, chair • Wendy Dean • Carl Flemons
• Seth Moates • Scott Renner • Jeff Ridgeway • David Riley
Staff Liaison: Kim Wanous**

Vision statement: To inform SRC members of existing and new legislation which affects the VRS program and people with disabilities and to advocate for legislation, policies, and practices that will enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities

Responsibilities: Same as vision statement above

Activities:

- Monitored state and federal legislation that affects individuals with disabilities
- Agreed to focus on state funding as a legislative priority
- Will continue to work on the Facebook page for the subcommittee
- Will continue to work on a list of SRC members who can contact legislators and will provide advocacy training to those on this list

Consumer Services/Program Evaluation Subcommittee

**Scott Renner, chair • Jay Croft • Wendy Dean • Rachel Hughes
• Mitch Kemmer • Gaylen S. Pugh • Bobby Wise
Staff Liaison: Michael Quinn**

Vision statement: To enhance consumer satisfaction with services, service providers and employment, and to assist VRS in developing and implementing strategies to ensure consumer satisfaction

(Continue on Page 14)

SRC

subcommittee activities

Responsibilities:

- Facilitate council review of the agency's consumer satisfaction survey and results
- Collaborate with the agency in conducting the Statewide Needs Assessment every three years

Activities:

- Reviewed Blind and Deaf Consumer Satisfaction Survey and its results
- Continued work on a checklist for "impartial hearing officer"
- Made no recommendations or changes to existing blind and deaf surveys
- Worked with Auburn University to develop and implement FY 2010 survey of the general VR program
- Provided input on the survey format and recommended that the survey be adopted and used for the general VR program
- Suggested the following for the consumer satisfaction survey:
 - 1) Change satisfaction scale to percentages instead of a one to five scale
- Worked with Auburn University to conduct the 2011 Comprehensive Needs Assessment and approved its method of conducting the survey
- Recommended approval of order of selection and most significant disability (MSD) policies formulated by the agency

Policies:

- SRC approved motion to enable VR to develop MSD and order of selection policies that would go into effect only if they were needed and after consultation with the SRC.

Membership/Nomination Subcommittee
Carl Flemons, Chair • Kevin Orr • Ronnie Welch
Staff Liaison: Graham Sisson

*Vision statement: To maintain SRC membership so that it meets
federal law and enables the SRC to perform its duties*

Responsibilities:

- Maintain current membership list
- Recruit new members to fill vacancies
- Secure re-appointments of existing members where eligible
- Assist in orientation of new members
- Assist in identifying training needs of SRC members

Activities:

- Continued to work toward meeting the training needs of members, including training on the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)
- Through the SRC liaison, updated the SRC list on the Alabama secretary of state's website
- Accepted the resignations of four subcommittee members: Steven Snider, Bobby Wise, Dan Roth and Omar Smith
- The subcommittee is seeking nominations for vacant positions

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“A Voice for Alabamians with Disabilities”

Bylaws Revision Subcommittee

Carl Flemons, chair • Karl Wade

Staff Liaison: Graham Sisson

Vision statement: To maintain SRC Bylaws so that they are consistent with federal law and allow for smooth operation of the SRC

Responsibilities:

- Monitor effectiveness of bylaws
- Recommend any necessary changes on an annual basis

Activities:

- Continued to monitor the effectiveness of the bylaws and will recommend any necessary changes yearly (because the Rehabilitation Act was not reauthorized during 2011, no changes were made to the bylaws)

Deaf Advisory Subcommittee

Jay Croft, chair

Staff Liaison: Bedarius Bell

Vision statement: To inform the SRC and the VR agency of issues or input for the VR program for people who are deaf

Responsibilities:

- Report on issues of the deaf and assist in the development of a strategic plan for people who are deaf

Activities:

- Informed SRC members of the results of the Deaf Services Stakeholders meeting
- Drafted a resolution encouraging ADRS to fund paid internships for deaf students in VR programs. The SRC voted to approve this resolution.
- Recommended that ADRS make strong efforts to hire deaf counselors and deaf persons in support services for the deaf

SRC

membership: Demographics



Davis Martin
Employer/Parent
Auburn University
Auburn



Cary F. Boswell
Commissioner
Alabama Department of
Rehabilitation Services
Montgomery



Employer
Joan Adkison
Human Resource Director
American Apparel Inc.
Selma



Parent
Donald Botta Sr.
Alabaster



Consumer
Trisston Wright Burrows
Hoover



Employer
Glen Camp
Troy



Consumer
Jay Croft
Montgomery



Consumer
Wendy Dean
Opelika



Employer
H. Bryan Dodson
Phoenix
Huntsville



Consumer/Veteran
Carlston F. Flemons Jr.
Somerville



Employer
Hal George
Walmart
Saraland



Parent
Barbara Williams Harrell
Montgomery



SACAP Representative
Rachel Hughes, director
State of Alabama
Client Assistance Program
Montgomery



WIA Board Representative
Mickey Hutto
Montgomery

membership demographics



Consumer/Attorney
Richard "Mitch" Kemmer
Centreville



Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
Glennie Melton
Senior Counselor
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Opelika



Consumer
Seth Moates
Wetumpka



**Advocacy Organization/
Consumer**
Kevin Orr
Alabaster



Labor
Keith Patterson
Communication Workers of America
Opelika



Parent
Jamelle Prewett
Montgomery



**Parent/Advocacy
Organization**
Dr. Gaylen S. Pugh
Madison



Consumer/CIL Representative
Scott Renner
Montgomery



Consumer
Jeff Ridgeway
Mobile



Consumer
David Riley
Semmes
**Selected as "Disabled
Veteran of the Year"*



Special Education
Daniel Roth
Special Education Services
State Department of Education
Hoover



CRP Representative
Omar Terrell Smith
Muscle Shoals

membership demographics



Consumer
Steven Snider
Heflin



Consumer
Karl Wade
Prattville



Consumer/CRP Representative
Ronnie Welch
Dothan



**Consumer/Youth
with a Disability**
Jamarcus White
Verbena



Former VR Administrator
Bobby Wise
Prattville



State Rehabilitation Council Conflict of Interest Policy

Statement of Policy

No member of the council shall cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or the member's organization or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under state law. 34 CFR Part 361.17 (g). When conflicts of interest are identified, the council member to whom the conflict applies must abstain from voting on the issue causing the conflict.

Required Disclosure

Each council member shall disclose orally or in writing all conflicts of interest, including those which are unclear or potential. Such disclosure shall be made to the chairperson of the council.

Effective Date

This Conflict of Interest Policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by a majority of the council. Upon such approval, this policy is incorporated by reference into the council bylaws.

Approved: November 29, 2000

Special recognition and thanks
for a job well done are
extended to former members

**Dan Roth, Omar Smith,
Steven Snider and Bobby Wise**

who have now rotated off the Council.

Prepared by:



Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES

Cary F. Boswell
Commissioner

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